

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

S E C R E T STATE 119554

EXDIS, FOR AMBASSADORS FROM ASST SECY ROGERS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4 (IMPDET)

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, GY, CU, BR, VE

SUBJECT: CUBA/GUYANA MILITARY CONNECTION

REF: (A) GEORGETOWN 0741, (B) GEORGETOWN 0846

1. REFTELS REPORTED GOG CONFIRMATION TO AMBASSADOR KREBS THAT GUYANA DEFENSE FORCE TROOPS HAVE BEEN SENT TO CUBA FOR TRAINING AND THAT SMALL NUMBER OF CUBAN "ADVISORS" ARE NOW PRESENT IN GUYANA. GIVEN SENSITIVITY OF GUYANESE/CUBAN LINK IN BOTH BRAZIL AND VENEZUELA AND FACT THAT GOG HAS REPEATEDLY PUBLICLY DENIED THESE FACTS, AMBASSADORS, AT THEIR DISCRETION, ARE REQUESTED TO BRING FOLLOWING INFORMATION TO ATTENTION OF FONMINS OR OTHER APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS. IN DOING SO, HOWEVER,

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SPECIAL CARE SHOULD BE TAKEN TO AVOID ANY APPEARANCE OF

FANNING INFLAMMATORY RUMORS CIRCULATING IN GEORGETOWN AND PRESUMABLY ALREADY PICKED UP BY HOST GOVTs. PURPOSE OF EXERCISE WOULD BE TO PLACE MATTER INTO PERSPECTIVE. YOU SHOULD ALSO CAUTION FONMINs TO CAREFULLY PROTECT BOTH INFO AND SOURCE SINCE WE ARE MOST ANXIOUS TO AVOID LENDING SUBSTANCE TO INCREASING GOG PARANOIA ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF US COLLUSION WITH GUYANA'S NEIGHBORS IN EFFORT TO "DESTABILIZE" GOG.

2. YOU MAY DRAW UPON FOLLOWING TALKING POINTS FOR YOUR DISCUSSIONS:

--FONMIN WILLs HAS CONFIRMED TO US AMBASSADOR IN GEORGETOWN THAT 128 GUYANESE DEFENSE FORCE MILITARY PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN SENT TO CUBA FOR TRAINING IN SPECIAL WEAPONS AND JUNGLE WARFARE. WE CAN NOTE POSSIBILITY THAT MORE WILL BE SENT. GOG HAS REITERATED TO US THAT THIS TRAINING IS STRICTLY FOR DEFENSIVE PURPOSES AND THAT GOG HAS NO AGGRESSIVE INTENTIONS.

--CUBANS MADE A FEW STOPS IN GUYANA FOR REFUELING DURING THEIR ANGOLAN AIRLIFT AND ESTABLISHED REFUELING FACILITY THERE. PM BURNHAM HAS BEEN QUOTED IN WASHINGTON POST INTERVIEW AS SAYING THAT REFUELING FACILITIES WOULD BE AVAILABLE TO CUBA IN CASE OF FURTHER CUBAN ACTIONS AGAINST RHODESIA AND/OR SOUTH AFRICA. FONMIN WILLs HAS CONFIRMED THIS POSSIBILITY TO US SEVERAL TIMES WHILE DENYING THAT GOG WOULD PERMIT EITHER CUBA OR SOVIET UNION TO USE GUYANA AS BASE FOR AGGRESSION AGAINST ANY COUNTRY IN HEMISPHERE.

--MORE RECENTLY, FONMIN WILLs HAS CONFIRMED THAT THERE ARE SIX CUBAN MILITARY TECHNICIANS ASSOCIATED WITH REFUELING FACILITY AT TIMEHRI AIRPORT. WE HAVE HEARD REPORTS AND RUMORS RE POSSIBILITY THAT OTHER CUBAN MILITARY ADVISORS ARE IN GUYANA, BUT WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO OBTAIN CONFIRMATORY INFO.

--WE HAVE CONVEYED OUR CONCERN TO GOG ABOUT POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES OF GUYANA/CUBA MILITARY RELATIONSHIP,
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REMINDING GOG THAT ITS GROWING TIES WITH CUBA ARE ADDING TO ANXIETY, MISUNDERSTANDING AND HEIGHTENED CONCERN AMONG OAS NATIONS REGARDING CUBAN INTENTIONS WITHIN THIS HEMISPHERE.

--USG IS FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS IN GUYANA CLOSELY, ESPECIALLY MATTER OF CUBAN INVOLVEMENT. KISSINGER

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